

Home Tree Care 101

Briefing for Montgomery County Forest
Conservation Advisory Committee
2015

Why Home Tree Care?



Home Tree Care 101

Legislation that provides education in and of itself

- Forest Conservation Law
- Urban Tree Canopy Law
- Street Tree Law



- **But what about homeowners?**
 - About 85% of county tree canopy is on private property, according to James Urban.
 - Creates an opportunity to inform county residents -- who care about trees -- as to how to maintain and sustain mature trees.
 - As we know, maintenance can be key in long-term survival of trees.

Value of trees to the average homeowner

- Property value added on average of 10% for homes where there are mature trees on the lot or if the home is near a park or forest.
- Property value can increase as much as 20% where there are mature trees.
- Intrinsic value of trees in the urban environment. We need to take care of our work horses of the environment.

Home Tree Care 101

- Piloted by Conservation Montgomery in 2012 and 2013
- Partnership formed with Montgomery County government in 2014.
- So far: 6 classes
- 4 more classes set for spring of 2015
- New grant funds coming in FY16 budget for a video and additional classes for fall of 2015



What is it?

- Outdoor class where the instructors go to the students.
- Hands-on demonstration of how to prune, how to plant, how to mulch, etc.
- A **community** event, where neighborhood leaders step forward and organize their neighborhood.



How does it work?

- DEP administers the funding and monitors the project.
- CM conducts all the outreach, prepares materials and accepts applications from county residents who want to organize a class in their neighborhood.
- CM works with a neighborhood organizer to set up each class and a schedule for the season.
- Two arborists are under contract to CM. They teach each class on a Saturday morning from 10 a.m. to noon, in the spring and fall seasons.
- CM develops information packets to hand out to each class participant at the end of the class.
- CM sends reports and invoices for reimbursement to DEP.
- Small fee of \$20 per person covers CM overhead and time. Also creates a sense of the consumer getting a good bang for their buck.





What we cover...

- Safety when working with trees
- When and how to hire a professional when it's needed
- Structural pruning and pruning cuts
- The right tools to use when working on trees at home
- Tree selection – and right tree, right place
- Mulching, watering, general maintenance
- Cabling
- Ways to see that a tree is in distress or decline – when it's time to say goodbye...
- Invasive species and how to remove them properly
- Hazard trees, when to let them go



Filling an information gap...

- Homeowners are hungry for information about taking care of trees on their property.
- Home Tree Care 101 has been well-received so far.
- Website is set up for HTC 101
- Residents apply online through the CM website



Typical customer feedback

- “Very well organized and great information.”
- “Even though I knew something about taking care of trees and shrubs, I learned so much more in this class.”
- “The arborists were enthusiastic and did an excellent job in helping us appreciate the value of trees.”
- “I loved the handouts which helped me better understand how to do my tree trimming. I also liked the trimming saw they used and seeing that demonstrated. I learned that I was not correctly trimming my trees before!”



Thank you!

Questions!



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